

Community News >>>

Copley police officer awarded Badge of Bravery

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By Maria Lindsay

COPLEY — Officials from Copley and the state, as well as family and friends, gathered to watch as Copley Police Department Officer Ben Campbell received the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery at a ceremony March 25 at the Radisson Hotel.

Campbell is pictured at top right, at far right, with family members and U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio).

The Badge of Bravery, created in 2008 and awarded annually by the U.S. attorney general, honors exceptional acts of bravery in the line of duty by federal, state and local law enforcement officers, according to Copley Police Department officials.

Campbell was the first officer on the scene of a mass shooting in the Goodenough Avenue/Schocolag Road area of Copley Aug. 7, 2011, in which eight people were shot, seven of whom died instantly, according to Copley Police officials. Campbell searched for the shooter, Michael Hance, and shot and killed him after he refused Campbell's orders to drop his weapon.

Hance had killed Russ Johnson, 67; his wife, Gudrun Johnson, 64; their son, Bryan Johnson, 44; his daughter, Autumn Johnson, 16; Copley native Craig Dieter, 51; his son, Scott Dieter, 11; and Amelia Shambaugh, 16, who was Autumn's friend. He also seriously wounded Rebecca Dieter, Craig Dieter's sister, and Hance's girlfriend.

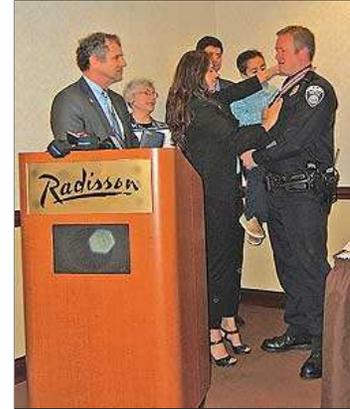
Brown said the Badge of Bravery is "one of the most prestigious awards in America" and Campbell displayed a "great example of courage in working through the fear of the incident to do his job and protect the community."

Campbell also received acknowledgements and presentations made by state Sen. Frank LaRose (R-District 27), state Rep. Marilyn Slaby (R-District 38), U.S. Attorney General Steven Dettelbach and representatives from U.S. Sen. Rob Portman's (R-Ohio) office and U.S. Rep. Jim Renacci's (R-District 16) office during the March 25 ceremony.

Campbell, pictured above bottom right wearing the Badge of Bravery, has 20 years of law enforcement experience, beginning at The University of Akron, and has been with the Copley Police Department since August 2000.

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